

No. 188 October 1992

# Hillandale

NEWS





## MECHANICAL MUSIC

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# HULLANDALE NEWS



The Official Journal of The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society

**Founded 1919**

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Front Cover illustration: Five of the pygmies at Westminster, June 1905; see page 103



## EDITOR'S DESK

### London Meetings

I think that the highlights of the year, for those members living within striking distance of the centre of London, are the monthly meetings in the National Sound Archive building in South Kensington. The Society is fortunate in having so many guests and members willing to share some aspect of their hobby with others. None of us know everything there is to know about our subject and there is always something new we can learn at these meetings. One added bonus of these occasions is that we can meet new members, renew old friendships and, as happened to me on a recent visit, meet some of our members from other countries. I would urge those members, who have not yet attended a London meeting, to give it a try; you will, more likely than not, leave knowing more about the hobby than when you arrived! I would also remind those, who have not attended a meeting for some time, that they are missing some enjoyable and stimulating evenings.

I would also draw readers' attention to the London Meetings notice on page 100.



### Hillandale News

One of the prime functions of our magazine is to keep members informed of the Society's activities. *Hillandale News* is the only means of contact with the Society for most of our members. It is my policy to publish as many reports of the activities of the Society as I can and to publish all letters received, that I consider of interest. Please would all branch secretaries send me reports of their groups' activities. I would also welcome letters from as many readers as possible, who feel inspired to write in. The feed-back from these letters can promote a lot of interest for those many members who have no other way of keeping in touch with our Society.

While I have plenty of articles in line for publication, I would welcome many more, for the wider the choice I have, the greater the variety and interest I can offer our readership. In particular, I would like more articles about machines. Would readers, who are inspired by the muse, please put pen to paper and send their writings to me.

I must apologise for the late despatch of the August issue. This was due to the mailing agents forgetting to tell the printer they were on holiday in the first two weeks of August.

Please note that material intended for inclusion in *Hillandale News* must reach the Editor not later than **six weeks before the first day of the month of issue.**

Hence the deadline for the **December** issue will be **15th October 1992.**

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# OLGA WOOD GRAMOPHONE COMPANY DISCOGRAPHY 1908/9

by Jonathan Dobson

As a follow-on to my article "New Wood from Old Timber", which appeared in the last issue of *Hillandale News*, I've assembled the complete discography of Mrs Olga Wood for the delectation of collectors! (I'm also at work on her husband's discography for Arthur Jacob's new book).

Research at the EMI archive confirmed that she and her husband went to the Gramophone Co. studios on three occasions between July 1908 and June 1909 to record the items listed. Of the seventeen matrixes recorded only six were published. Only two sides were missing from the collection in the Royal Academy of Music! The missing records are 9535e "Poppies" and 10219e "Thoughts have Wings" by Lehmann. "Poppies" is something of a mystery. The recording ledgers failed to mention who the composer was. The BBC catalogue lists two songs entitled "Poppies"; one is by Richard Strauss, the other by Hamilton Harty. Either is likely. I would plump for the Harty, as the other titles she recorded were 'songs' as opposed to 'lieder'. None of these test pressings give any indication as to composer; "Love Me if I live" (matrix 2796f) could be by Cowen, Foote or Langdon; hence the question mark as to attribution. I'm not an expert in the English 'art song' but the style is 'Cowenesque' so I've made a cautious guess. The old Gramophone Co. ledgers of that period are sketchy. I filled in some of the gaps from the information at the Academy. I've included matrix 3107f (the recording of Sir Henry Wood's singing voice) along with his wife's records. It belongs with them personally and historically.

Perhaps somewhere, in the undisturbed corner of the RAM, the 'lost' discs have survived, but the chance is slim. I am still hoping to find more Wood test pressings. Only two Columbia test records have come to light; as the bulk of his output was for Columbia I find this intriguing. In my search to find more, disquieting rumours have reached my ears: crates of records being tipped some years ago in order to make more office space etc... One can only hope that some over-zealous porter didn't destroy vast quantities of unpublished material! We will all have to keep our fingers crossed.

## Session 1, 17th July 1908:

8802e	Unissued	Mendelssohn	"On Wings of Song" (sung in German)
8803e	iss. GC3778	Tchaikovsky	Aria from "Joan of Arc"
2529f	Unissued	Debussy	Aria from "L'Enfant Prodigue"

## Session 2, 4th February 1909:

9533e	Unissued	Mendelssohn	"On Wings of Song" (sung in English)
9534e	Unissued	Mendelssohn	as above take 2
9535e	Unissued	Harty? Strauss?	"Poppies" (see notes above)
9536e	Unissued	Capel	"Star and Rose"
9537e	Unissued	Capel	as above take 2



## Session 2, 4th February 1909 cont.

2796f	Unissued	Rogers	"At Parting"
		Cowen?	"Love Me if I live" (see notes above)
2797f	Unissued	Somervell	"Sleep Baby Sleep"
		Mendelssohn	"Praise thou the Lord"

## Session 3, 4th June 1909:

10218e	iss. GC3833	Allitsen	"Since We Parted"
		Rogers	"At Parting"
10219e	Unissued	Lehmann	"Thoughts Have Wings"
10220e	iss. GC3834	Somervell	"Sleep Baby Sleep"
10221e	iss. GC3835	Coates	"Orpheus and his Lute"
		Coates	"Under the Greenwood Tree"
3105f	iss. 03161	Pitt	"Love is a Dream"
		Capel	"Star and Rose"
3106f	iss. 03162	Coates	"Who is Sylvia?"
		Coates	"There was a Lover and his Lass"
(Mr Henry Wood)			
3107f	Unissued	Schumann	"The Lotus Flower"
		Hatton	"To Anthea"

## LONDON MEETINGS

The National Sound Archive have asked us to publish the **Rules** which apply to Society Members attending the London Meetings. These are listed below:

- 1) **All** members must first report to Reception at 29 Exhibition Road, so that their presence can be recorded for fire safety purposes.
- 2) Admission to 47 Princes Gate, at times when a C.L.P.G.S. member or Benet Bergonzi is not manning the door, is solely by getting the receptionist to 'phone the meeting (phone just outside the lecture room door).
- 3) Even if the door to 47 Princes Gate is being held open, all members must first report to Reception at 29 Exhibition Road.
- 4) Obviously strict punctuality is in everyone's interests. Because of the necessity to report to reception, members must allow an extra 5 minutes or so for crossing the road, etc.
- 5) If Benet Bergonzi is not around, C.L.P.G.S. members must be aware that they are responsible for safeguarding the building. Even if (as may have happened previously) someone else leaves the door wedged open, **C.L.P.G.S. members must not leave it open.**

# AN UNUSUAL PHONOGRAPH

by Rick Hardy

Many years ago I obtained from a jumble sale a 1940s cylinder Dictaphone. Since then it has been moved around from house to house over some twenty years or so finishing up each time in either a shed or an attic. About three years ago I mentioned to Len Watts that I had this machine and he reckoned that although the cutter/playback head tracked at a different pitch from two-minute phonographs and ran at a different speed he could adapt it. After having the machine in his possession for several years without touching it Len had a rush of blood and finally completed the conversion.

I am happy to say that the machine tracks excellently with an 'arm' brilliantly designed by Len. The machine also plays at the correct speed with mint cylinders coming over very well. Unfortunately the electrical pick-up (a Shure M44C with a two-minute stylus from Expert Stylus Company) seems to exacerbate noise from worn examples. Could anyone with more experience than myself suggest any improvements? Please don't say "Get a real phonograph" ~ I already have one!



Len Watts at work converting the Dictaphone





The finished 'phonograph' linked into Rick's hi-fi system

## Forthcoming Meetings in London

London Meetings are held at the National Sound Archive, 29 Exhibition Road, South Kensington, on the third Thursday evening of the month promptly at **6.45pm** (unless noted otherwise). Members' attention is drawn to the **London Meetings Notice on page 100**.

<b>October 15th</b>	"Desert Island Discs Plus Four" with Geoff Edwards
<b>November 19th</b>	"We Have Our Own Records" with Frank Andrews
<b>December 17th</b>	"Entirely for Pleasure" with Tom Little
<b>January 21st 1993</b>	Paul Tritton & Peter Copeland on <i>The Lost Voice of Queen Victoria</i>
<b>February 18th</b>	"Mr and Mrs Henry Wood Re-discovered" with Jonathan Dobson
<b>March 18th</b>	"The Gramophone Record as an Historic Document" Part 4 with Chris Hamilton

## Corrections

to *Romeo and...Duplicate?* article by Peter Adamson in *Hillandale News* 187:

- p.72 Second sentence on right column should start: As the film sound-track was issued on LP (eg Colosseum CRLP 10209/10) that may be the origin,...
- p.73 Top line on right column should be at top of left column.
- p.73 References: Palmer *Gramophone* pp1817 to 1819



# THE AFRICAN PYGMIES, 25 AUGUST 1905

by Jeffrey Green

Early, if not the first, commercial recordings of Africans in Britain were announced in the January-February 1906 catalogue listing five Gramophone Concert sides. "This remarkable tribe of dwarfs who inhabit the forests of Central Africa are absolutely unique...their language is quite unknown". Two of the sides begin with an Englishman's voice stating that it was 25 August 1905. Otherwise the sounds are African, males talking, females talking, and drumming. A moment's thought might explain why the discs are rare. Why purchase the evidence of small black people you could not see, speaking in a language you did not comprehend?

The six Africans arrived in London on 1 June 1905, on the cargo ship *Orestes* from Egypt. The Briton responsible for their journey was James Jonathan Harrison, an officer in the militia in York from 1884 to September 1904, when he retired with the honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Harrison had travelled the world in search of big game, as his 1892 "A Sporting Trip Through India; Home by Japan and America" indicated. In 1904 he had been in the equatorial rain forests of the eastern Congo (today Zaire) in search of an okapi. He took photographs of pygmies, and on showing them to his friends in Britain, was encouraged to return to Africa to obtain humans. In late 1904 he travelled up the Nile, through the Sudan and Uganda, and with a Scottish engineer named J. P. Browne, persuaded six pygmies to leave the forests.

Reaching Khartoum in April 1905, news

was cabled to Britain, where veteran member of parliament Sir John Kennaway, who was head of the Church Missionary Society, asked Lord Lansdowne (the Foreign Secretary) about them. Foreign Office files at the Public Record Office, Kew, have the correspondence between London and Cairo, and a medical report showed that two of the six were fit and one woman was seriously ill. But the Africans were not British and there was nothing Lord Lansdowne could do to prevent the exploitation.

The six Africans were in hospital in Cairo, and were so reported in London's *Pall Mall Gazette* on 28 April 1905. Fearing for his investment, Harrison sped to England and saw Lansdowne, gave an interview to the *Daily Mail* (published on 26 April), and reached his home, Brandesburton Hall, near Beverley in the East Riding of Yorkshire, on 27 April. His local weekly, the *Beverley Guardian*, had reported on the 15 April that the pygmies were coming: "The little men are of a warlike disposition...the pygmies wear hardly any clothing". Two weeks later it reported Harrison's express journey via Naples to London, and that "one of the objects of his expedition was to secure, if possible, for medical and scientific purposes, a few of the tiny inhabitants of the great forest".

Science, anthropology, travel, adventure, all combined to encourage great interest in the four men and two women. "All of them are genuine...not the alleged spurious specimens which have appeared in one or two countries". Reporting that "permission to



Gramophone Concert Record G.C.-11270

land in England" had been granted, the *Beverley Guardian* of 6 May quoted Harrison as stating "Thousands of people will be glad of a chance of seeing what they have read about so much". It seems that the five discs were made in that spirit.

It seems that Harrison's investment had been made in order to profit from public displays of the small people. They topped the bill at the London Hippodrome from 5 June 1905 for fourteen weeks, appearing with other acts twice daily. The *Referee* reported on 11 June "Ethnologically the exhibition of these dwarf savages from the Ituri Forest is interesting enough" and described "some tom-toming by one of the pygmies Pygmies", adding that three males danced in a style that "resembled in almost every detail the cellar-flap dances of 'Arry and 'Arriet, when out 'ollerday-making."

The *Era*, a second London show business weekly, reported the Hippodrome appearance of the pygmies on 10 June 1905.

"These curious little people have, it is said, quickly adapted themselves to the new, and to them, strange surroundings...they enjoy three hearty meals a day". Frederick Trussell of the Hippodrome told the *Era* that he had "got on limited speaking terms with the pygmies".

The Africans were advertised along with other Hippodrome attractions (including 17 polar bears at one time) in the *Referee* from 11 June to 20 August 1905 as "CENTRAL AFRICAN PYGMIES from ITURI (Stanley Forest). THE MOST CURIOUS RACE IN THE WORLD. ONLY FOUR EXPLORERS HAVE EVER SEEN THEM. MINIATURE MEN AND WOMEN. ABSOLUTE SPECIMENS OF PRIMITIVE CREATION".

The *Beverley Guardian* of 3 June copied a London report and noted "Mangani, the leader, appears to be the only one of the party who was not astonished by the vastness of London.". The *Referee* of Sunday 18 June reported "The Pygmies are going strong. I took tea with them on



Wednesday afternoon". On 29 June the four males and one woman visited Westminster and were photographed on the terrace with members of parliament, Harrison and "Mr Hoffman, interpreter". Hoffman had been personal servant to Henry Stanley during the 1887-1890 trans-continental "rescue of Emin Pasha", detailed in Stanley's *In Darkest Africa* of 1890. That book, soon issued in several languages and many editions, has considerable details of the pygmies of the Ituri Forest (which some tried to call the Stanley Forest) but is strangely silent on Hoffman.

The *Sphere* reported on 15 July that the pygmies had been at the Buckingham Palace garden party for Princess Victoria "the other day". The *Beverley Guardian* of 22nd July reported "Little Brown Men at Buckingham Palace"; Harrison, Trussell and the "un-musical tom-tom drums had been there. The king and his heir were absent and so missed "the triumph of the afternoon" ~ the Africans dancing on the lawn.

At the end of July the Africans finally appeared in Brandesburton, at Harrison's substantial home off the village high street. Three thousand paid to see them; over one thousand cycled to the village that weekend.

The *Beverley Guardian* reported the recording session in its 2 September 1905 edition. "MYSTIFIED PIGMIES. WILD DELIGHT OVER THE GRAMOPHONE". It told its Yorkshire readers "The beauty of English girls has been too much for one of the

pygmies brought over by Mr Harrison. He has fallen violently in love with a pretty fair-haired girl who is employed as a typist by the Gramophone Company". On Friday 25 August Mongonga "the youngest of the pigmy band" declared his love and pointed out the lady with "a deadly-looking spear". Those spears had been with the Africans at Westminster and at Buckingham Palace, too. "For sheer joy he danced, keeping time to a banjo solo that was issuing from a monster gramophone". The anthropological aspect crept in: "It is anticipated that in due course the master records will be offered to the British Museum".



Postcard posed in a London Studio, 1905

As the recording company sent the masters to Germany, and prepared to import the single-sided discs, Harrison continued to promote the Africans. His *Life Among the Pygmies of the Ituri Forest, Congo Free State* was published by Hutchinson in 1905. Postcards of the Africans went on sale. The group on the boat, probably with Browne, was followed by studio groups. The six

posed against a background of foliage, holding weapons, and the two women crouched near the drums. The exclusive London studio of W & D Downey took two similar shots; and individual poses of two males have been located, suggesting there are four others to locate. Locating those postcards will not be as tricky as identifying the six Africans by name, for there is a wide range of variants.

The *Beverley Guardian* (3 June 1905, page 8), the *Referee* (4 June 1905, page 4), the postcards, and the 1906 Gramophone Catalogue show these versions:

Mangani - Bokani - Bokane - Bakani

Mongono - Mongonga - Mongonga - Mongongo

Mafoti Mengi - Mafutimengi - Mafutiminga - not named

Mattoka - Matuka - Matuka - Matuke

and the two females are:

Marobi - Amuriapi - Amuriape - not named

Gooriigi - Kuarke - Kuarke/Quarke - not named

The medical report from Cairo suggests that Harrison had supplied details of their ages. Reports in the British press and on postcards must be from Harrison; as Dr Goodman in Egypt did not believe them, neither can we. Confusion was also in the minds of the Gramophone Company's executives, for GC 11269 and GC 11270 were marked ORIENTAL TALKING and GC 14196 and GC 14197 were ORIENTAL VOCAL. GC 1310, which is in Swahili, has not been handled by this writer. The talking discs were between "Bokani, the Chief of the Pygmies, and Mongongo" and "Conversation by two 'Pygmy Ladies' punctuated by Laughter". The vocal discs were duets between the Chief and Matuka and both also have drumming. This pair have the Englishman's voice stating the date to begin with; there is clapping at the end.

If the catalogue entry, in early 1906, indicates the first date the five discs were available for purchase, one cause of low sales would be that the Africans had ended their top-of-the-bill appearances at the London Hippodrome after fourteen weeks and had completed over three months touring the Empire circuit's theatres in the provinces. The middle of October 1905 saw them at Beverley, then Driffield, York and Lincoln, opening at the Hippodrome, Manchester on 23 October. On 30 October they opened at the Empire in Liverpool; on 6 November in Edinburgh; on 13 November in Glasgow, and on 27 November in Birmingham. 4 December saw them at the Empire in Shepherd's Bush, west London; and they were at the Empire in Bradford from a week from 11 December 1905.

As the discs became available details of their activities fade. They were in Berlin in mid-1906, and in east Yorkshire's Withernsea and Hornsea on 27 and 28 July. They then were at the King's Hall in Grimsby, and the Grand Pavilion in Bridlington; on 5 and 6 August they appeared at the New Pavilion, Eastbourne Pier, on the south coast, information that came via a handbill which fails to mention the discs. The end of February 1907 saw them at the King's Hall in Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, and from August they were at the Balkans Exhibition at Earl's Court, London. They were in Hull a day before sailing for Africa on 17 November 1907. They were back in the Ituri Forest on 23 January 1908, according to Harrison's diaries. Reuter's reported from Mombasa in late February 1908 that Harrison had "safely deposited at their homes the pygmies of the Ituri Forest".

An undated postcard of the pygmies has the following semi-literate but fascinating message "Dear Ciss I have sent you one of these photo to pick a nice fancy man how do they suite you I thought their face would be fetching what lovely faces they got" (sic).



Harrison died in 1923. His American wife died in 1932. After his marriage in 1910 he seems to have ceased travelling the world in search of big game. There are suggestions that he married for money and that he needed money. Brandesburton Hall became and remains a home for the mentally ill. Hoffman's *With Stanley in Africa*, with one chapter about the pygmies in Britain, was published in London in 1938. The Congo Free State became the Belgian Congo in 1908; it became independent as the Democratic Republic of the Congo and was torn by civil war and the Katanga fighting with the involvement of the United Nations. Today it is the republic of Zaire. Pygmies still live in the Ituri Forest and Semliki River region. The discs? No contemporary comment has been traced. Can anyone help?

### Thanks and acknowledgements

My thanks to Peter Calvert, Bernth Lindfors, Rainer Lotz, Ian Massey, National Sound Archive and Brian Rust.

### Photographs:

Five of the pygmies at Westminster, June 1905. Courtesy Mike Wells

Postcard posed in a London Studio, 1905. Jeffrey Green Collection

GC 11270. Courtesy of Department of Tourism and Amenities, Scarborough Borough Council

## A LIFE OF SONG by George Frow

Cavan O'Connor, one of our Honorary Members, is almost certainly our oldest member, being born on July 1st 1899. On February 11th he was allotted one hour in the evening on BBC Radio 2 to talk about his life and recall some of his song successes. He reports that the programme was extracted from about 8 hours of recorded reminiscences.

From an operatic scholarship and training at the Royal College of Music Cavan O'Connor began in opera at the Old Vic in 1925 in Lillian Baylis's days, and made his first broadcast that year from Savoy Hill, settling down to a stage and concert hall career. Like his baritone friend and one-time member of this Society George Baker, he could also take on the 'vocal refrain' in dance band records. His first two recordings were played; these were the tenor songs from *The Mikado* and *The Gondoliers* on a Broadcast record.

During the 'thirties publicity as the mysterious Vagabond Lover - surely inspired by Rudy Vallee and pushed by *The Daily Mirror* - brought Cavan O'Connor plenty of stage work and studio recording on various labels under as many pseudonyms. This time in his life is now recalled in a representative selection entitled "Smilin' Through", now available on ASV's Living Era series CD AJA 5085 or Cassette ZC AJA 5085. All who look out for light and Irish type ballads will enjoy these tracks, typical of just a few years from 1931 and a singing progress that has lasted over 70 years. A record indeed, Cavan, and many congratulations!

## LETTERS



### EMG Horns

Dear Sir,

After much experimentation I believe that I have perfected a technique for producing, economically, reproduction E.M.G. horns to a good standard.

I know that these horns were made in several sizes and am seeking information whereby I can obtain precise measurements for my copies. Do you know where this information is available? Could you put me on to someone who could help?

The second point I would like to make is an idea for *Hillandale News*. It must be very difficult filling out each issue with news and information on a subject which is not infinite.

May I suggest to you a 'Questions Corner' in each issue. It could occupy one complete page and the questions sent in by readers could be answered by a distinguished panel of experts (of which there must be a very wide choice) selected by the Editor.

If there is not sufficient response from the readership, I'm sure it is not beyond possibilities to pad out a few interesting questions from invented sources to stimulate initial interest.

If this idea is of interest to you, please let me know as I have a couple of questions lined-up to kick-off with.

Yours faithfully, John D. Phillips, Forest Hill, London

{This idea was tried by one of my predecessors and dropped through lack of interest. However I am prepared to give it a go if there is enough support. What about it, readers? Ed.}

### Edward, Prince of Wales

Dear Editor,

In *Hillandale News* No.186, in the report on the London Meeting for March 1992, mention is made of the abdication of Edward VIII. I have a record made by Edward, as Prince of Wales, shortly after the First World War and would like to know exactly when it was recorded and if it is of particular value.

The details are:

VICTOR (Camden N.J.) 35746

Side A: "Sportsmanship" speech by HRH Prince of Wales

Side B: "God Bless the Prince of Wales" played by the Band of HM Coldstream Guards.

I am a newcomer to C.L.P.G.S. and, living where I do, it is difficult to get information for myself, so any help from other members would be much appreciated.

Are there any other members of C.L.P.G.S. in the Eastern Caribbean?

Yours sincerely, Eric Smith, Antigua, West Indies

### Embassy and Crown Records

Dear Editor,

A few comments on the latest article in the series "Records in Store" by Frank Andrews, which I have found most interesting and informative.

The section on 'Embassy' records brought memories of my younger days when I would eagerly scan the shelves at our local "Woolies" to see what the latest releases were. As I recall the purchase price was 4/6d, which compared with 6/3½d for an E.M.I. or Decca, so my pocket money bought more discs. The latest 'hit' records were 'shadowed' by Embassy and the quality of recording was excellent.



I think that the 45rpm discs appeared some time after the first 78rpm issues, and EP discs at 7/6d and both 10" and 12" LPs were issued. I forget the price of these but they were cheap. (I quote these prices from memory, so may not be quite correct. i.e. the EP may have been 7/9d, but it was in that region.)

There was an earlier design of sleeve for the 78s, plainer and on brown paper.

As regards the Crown 223 with Charles D. Smart at the organ, this, as all his Crown discs, was recorded at the small Wurlitzer pipe organ installed at the Crystalate studios. This instrument had been originally imported by the Filmophone company. It was later acquired by Decca, with Crystalate, and continued in use until just after the war. It is now in private ownership. Charles Smart was at one time resident at the Plaza, Piccadilly, and his discs made there were on Edison Bell Winner and Radio labels, 10" and 8" respectively. The vocalist on Crown 223 sounds to me like Jack Plant. If not he, then a good imitation!

Yours sincerely,

Terry Hepworth, Lowestoft, Suffolk

### Lilian Bryant (1)

Dear Chris,

I am attempting to compile a biographical sketch of the pianist Lilian Bryant, who recorded for Pathé, Regal and possibly other labels. Her recording of 'Electric Girl' made in Paris in 1920 appeared anonymously on Regal G 7933.

According to Geoff Edwards (*Hillandale News* 186), she was the baritone George Baker's first wife. I know he married the singer Kathryn Hilliard, who died in 1933, and then, in 1936, Olive Groves, but do not know when he married Lilian Bryant, or when she died.

Any help with this pianist would be greatly appreciated, and postage gladly refunded.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Cliffe, Hitchin, Hertfordshire

### Lilian Bryant (2)

Dear Editor,

I was interested to read Geoff Edward's report on Len Watts' programme at the February London Meeting in the June *Hillandale News* and the reference to Lilian Bryant as George Baker's first wife. Although I had heard persistent rumours that Baker had been married three times, *Who's Who in the Theatre* quite clearly states that there were only two, Kathryn Hilliard and Olive Groves. I would therefore be interested to know if you or any of your readers can provide evidence to support the claim that Baker was actually married to Lilian Bryant; also if possible to indicate the period of the marriage and the reason for its termination (death/divorce).

Yours sincerely,

Michael P. Walters, Tring, Hertfordshire

### Help please

Dear Chris,

I hope some time in the future in collaboration with fellow member Len Watts to present a programme, at a London Meeting, of recordings issued with obvious mistakes and defects. It has the provisional title of "No one will notice it!"

We already have quite a lot of material, but as a programme of this type will consist of many 'snippets' any additions would be appreciated.

If any readers have records in their collections with wrong notes by either singers or musicians, unintentional asides, noises off

etc. a tape copy would be gratefully received.

We already have examples of singers as diverse as Caruso and Harry Lauder making blunders, but errors by little known artists on obscure labels would be just as welcome.

I would be grateful if examples would be sent direct to me at [REDACTED] Watford, Hertfordshire WD1 6BN. Perhaps it would be a good idea to 'phone me on [REDACTED] or drop me a line first, before sending the tape, just to check that we do not already have the recording.

Yours sincerely,

Rick Hardy, Watford, Hertfordshire

## Museum of Sound Recording Artifacts?

Dear Editor:

In his lucid account of the National Sound Archive's playing of the famous cylinder (*Hillandale News* 186, June 1992, pp50-53), Peter Copeland raised a very important point about sound archives and museums. In fact, what he says might be regarded almost as an official warning, along lines I have already considered and discussed privately.

I refer, of course, to his quite proper explanation of the NSA as the National **Sound** Archive, not the National **Artifact** Archive. It would be worth considering the implications of this; Peter Copeland states clearly: "Our duty is to preserve the sounds, not the media they are stored on... If you want a collection of artifacts, you should go to a museum, not a sound archive." This means, for a start, that the NSA has no responsibility for the preservation of albums, sleeves, printed notes, or contemporary packaging of **any kind** ~ an area I am personally quite keen on. If it came to the

crunch, for that matter, the NSA has no remit to preserve the finest of G&Ts **as such** ~ from a sonic view, Peter quite sensibly would opt for the vinyl pressing, all else being equal. And such invaluable material as old catalogues (always produced as transitory items on cheap self-destructive paper) have no serious claim on the NSA's preservation policy and techniques.

But where is our Museum of Sound Recording **Artifacts**? Perhaps we collectors should be more conscious of our own important role in preserving the total record artifact in its historical packaging and physical context. How many of us use (and tear) unusual sleeves or write on them in indelible ink, store albums in damp rooms, etc ~ all guaranteed to make some of these items excessively rare in only a few decades! (How many Neophone or Nicole sleeves have **you** seen? Or Victory and Marspen albums?) I should certainly think twice before giving, say, a fine historical album of discs to the NSA ~ they would presumably ditch the album in favour of the records (and from a preservation point of view, albums are **not** the best environment for discs!). I think I would not risk such a fate for such an artifact.

By contrast, when I recently visited the Library of Congress in Washington, I saw there shelves and shelves of American record albums stored in controlled atmospheric conditions ~ presumably preserved as **complete library material** items. There, the Library's remit would seem to be to be far more inclusive than the purely sonic aspect associated with the NSA (notwithstanding its connection with the British Library).

So I repeat ~ where **is** our Museum of Sound Recording Artifacts? Should we actually **attempt** to preserve the packaging? Can we afford not to? Must all this fascinating and often attractive ancillary material



rot away like old newspapers on careless collector's shelves?

Yours sincerely,

Peter Adamson, St.Andrews, Fife

## George Robey

Dear Editor,

The report on the London meeting of 23rd April (*Hillandale News* 187, August 1992, p.80) refers to George Robey "in his only appearance in costume in a sound film".

In 1933, Chaliapin starred in Pabst's film *Don Quichotte* with music by Ibert (including an item with harpsichord accompaniment, which I played to the C.L.P.G.S. in 1990). The French version of the film co-starred the comedian Dorville, but in the English version, Don Quixote's 'side-kick' was played by George Robey. I assume he appeared in costume! (Or was he only a voice?)

Yours sincerely,

Peter Adamson, St.Andrews, Fife

## C.L.P.G.S. TIES

The new design C.L.P.G.S. tie is now available in two colours, dark red or blue, both with golden woven logo. Ladies, this is an ideal Christmas present for your loved one; why not buy him two? **Only £4.80** each including p&p. (Overseas orders 10% extra). Orders should be placed with:

C.L.P.G.S. Booklist  
c/o George Glastris,

BRIGHTON BN22 2SR

## REPORTS



### London Meeting, 16th July 1992

Dominic Combe brought along his Triumph Phonograph with Cygnet horn and a randomly selected box of 2-minute cylinders and entertained us with just the right type of fare for a humid evening in high summer. His aim was to show the many kinds of entertainment that the 2-minute cylinders were able to offer; if you wanted it there was always heavy sentiment, with unrequited love, lost and dead lovers, and lovers' trysts with twittering birds. The comedians tried hard and were largely successful, but usually showed pantomime or concert party traits. One of the stars of his day, George Graves, was not a natural recorder. Ragtime was coming in as the 2-minute cylinders were going out in 1913, but the band recordings that were played were stilted and uncomfortable and better left to the instrumentalists. This type of programme allowed for comment and additional information from the floor and the different styles of recording and presentation of the companies of the day were useful talking points. Terms like High Speed, New Process, and Long and Short became clearer as the records were demonstrated. A Phonograph and Cylinder evening is a rarity these days and this was an entertaining occasion that we hope will be repeated.

A London Correspondent.

## London Meeting, August 20th 1992

In *Introducing the 30* George Woolford carried on where he left off in his talk in August 1990. He described the introduction by Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd. of the 12" record in 1903. The audience learnt of the of the attempts by the rivals of Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd. to provide larger records with longer playing times. George suggested that the first 12" records (the first Gramophone Monarchs of Tamagno and the first British Gramophone Monarchs) were recorded around March 1903 and released the following month.

His recital commenced with the March 1903 10" Victor 81001 (matrix 2186) of Ada Crossley singing *Caro Mio Ben*. He then played a 10" dubbing of *Romanza* by Filippi. This recording was supposed to be sung by Francesco Tamagno but George reckoned it was by Antonio Cotogni. A genuine Tamagno was heard next; *Ora e Per Sempre Addio* from Verdi's *Otello*. The next 1903 12" Gramophone Monarch we heard was *Mi par d'udir* from Bizet's *Pearl Fishers* sung by Enrico Caruso on Gramophone Monarch 052066. One of the first British 12" followed: Dan Leno in *The Robin* on Gramophone Monarch 01000. Ben Davies on Gramophone Monarch 02000 singing *Tom Bowling* was succeeded by Ellaline Terriss singing *I Want yer Ma Honey* from the show *Bluebell in Fairyland* on Gramophone Monarch 03000. Sir Charles Santley singing *Thou'rt Passing Hence, My Brother* by Sir Arthur Sullivan was followed by other artists from 1903 such as Josefina Huguët, Avelino Baptista, Leopold Demuth, Leo Slezak, Agustarello Affre, Edward Grieg and George Mozart. Luisa Tetrizzini (on a 1903 Zon-o-phone 9" record) singing *The Caballetto* from Bellini's *Sonnambula* concluded this most enjoyable evening.

Many of these records are hard to find these days and George Woolford is to be thanked for sharing these gems with us and giving us such a varied, entertaining and well-researched programme.

## Midlands Group Meeting at a Church Hall in Shirley, nr. Solihull, July 18th 1992

Chairman Eddie Dunn advised that plans were proceeding for our Group to attend the Dudley Show at Wimley Hall, nr Dudley on 1st/2nd August 1992.

It was also agreed that we organise another Walsall Record Fayre along the lines of last year. This will be held on Saturday 24th October. For full details see separate advert in this issue.

Phil Bennett has recently met Marilyn Middleton-Pollock, who is a devotee of some of the American Blues singers of the 1920s (e.g. Sippy Wallace and Carla Smith). She has expressed her interest in recording *acoustically* some of the songs of these blues artists. Phil has put in some spade work, and has located suitable equipment, a sound recording expert and even a four-piece band to accompany Mrs Middleton-Pollock. It is stressed that it is not intended to involve the Society as a whole or the Midlands Group in any financial commitment in this project, but hopefully a sponsor may be found. We'll keep you posted on the latest news of this project in future issues.

Our next meeting will be held on Saturday September 19th when Geoff Howl will give a programme on 78s entitled "Their First Record".

Wal Fowler opened the second part of the evening's activities with a programme of comedy items transferred from 78s and LPs to tape. These included items such as "Down Below" with Ian Wallace; "Tit-Bits" with Max Miller and Lonnie Donegan and "Two to Tango" with Gilbert Harding and Hermione Gingold.

One of our new members, Mark Morgan (whose musical interests range from Mediaeval music to 1920s dance and jazz bands) followed with a detailed history of



the Savoy Bands of the 1920s. He illustrated his talk with appropriate 78s beginning with "Last Night on the Back Porch" from 1923 and finishing with "Pasadena" from 1924. In between he played examples from the years to 1928.

A well deserved applause was given to both presenters for such an entertaining and instructive evening.

Geoff Howl

### **The Dudley Show, Himley Hall on 1st and 2nd August 1992**

The Midlands Group once again put on a highly successful exhibition of machines and accessories at the Dudley Show, Himley Hall on Saturday and Sunday 1st and 2nd August.

Eight members of the Group contributed some 60-odd machines ranging from a Trade Mark gramophone to a Dansette record player. Among the rarer items were a Busy Bee phonograph, Busy Bee, Standard and Harmony gramophones, all of American origin. (These were owned by Richard Taylor.)

Accessories included model 'HMV' lorries, china miniature gramophones, pictures, mini-discs, picture labels and a superb HMV flag.

A steady flow of visitors during the two days kept the stewards busy. As this venue is being converted into a Glass Museum the future of the exhibition is rather uncertain.

Geoff Howl

## **C.L.P.G.S. MIDLANDS GROUP**

are holding a *RECORD FAYRE* on **Saturday 24th October 1992** at the **METHODIST COMMUNITY HALL** (adjacent to the Central Hall Methodist Church), *Ablewell Street, Walsall.*

### **ITEMS ON SALE:**

Gramophones; phonographs; spares; cylinders; records (all types and speeds); vintage wireleses; associated literature and needle tins etc.

### **STALLS:**

A few available at £10 each.

### **GENERAL ADMISSION:**

50p per head; O.A.P.s and children 25p each.

### **OPEN:**

Stall holders at 9am - General public at 10am to 4pm.

### **PARKING:**

Limited space in private yard by hall; nearby municipal car parks and restricted street parking.

### **LOCATION:**

From J7 of M6 take main A34 Birmingham road into Walsall. This leads into Ablewell Street. 5 minutes walk from Walsall Railway Station.

**REFRESHMENTS:** Will be on sale in the hall. Local pubs nearby.

### **STALL ENQUIRIES:**

Contact - Wal Fowler, Tel: [REDACTED] or Geoff Howl, Tel: [REDACTED]

## PHONOFAIR '92

This event was held at Fairfield's School, Trinity Avenue, Northampton on Saturday May 9th 1992. This was the fourth time the event was held at this venue. The weather was excellent up to the day when it let us down completely - heavy rain all day. I hope it did not put too many people off, although attendances were similar to previous events. The number of stall holders was up on previous years, and some had good strong tables. Hopefully we shall be able to hire enough for everybody to have them next year.

The usual wide range of items were on sale ranging from 78s, to machines, to the Society's stalls and to needle tins and accessories. Some very nice gramophone postcards were seen. There were machines

being displayed in the second hall and Phillips West Two showed some items from their next auction.

Thanks to all who helped and to all who came. This now seems to be the only Phonofair with a wide range of machines, accessories - in fact anything to do with the 'Talking Machine'!

I hope to see you all next year for the 5th Northampton Phonofair. The provisional date is Saturday 24th April 1993.

See the advertisements in future issues of *Hillandale News*.

**Ruth Lambert**

The photographs in this report are by courtesy of member A. J. George.



'Dog Model' for sale? Don Watson is on the left with Tom Stephenson holding the 'Trade Mark Model'





Plenty of bargains?



Eddie Dunn, George Frow and A. N. Other deep in conversation

# LAMBERT AND EDISON-BELL INDESTRUCTIBLE CYLINDERS IN BRITAIN

by John S. Dales

## Part Two

### The Lambert Co. Ltd., London

#### Introduction

Part one of this article dealt with the Lambert Chicago and Edison-Bell Indestructible cylinders that we can look upon, more or less, as companion issues. This, the concluding part, will deal with the cylinders as manufactured by The Lambert Company Ltd., London E.C. Henceforth for simplicity, I shall refer to this company as 'Lambert London'.

May I again remind the reader that this is not a company history, but deals solely with cylinder record production. For those wishing to follow the history of events I refer them to two informative accounts, written by Frank Andrews. These were published in the *Talking Machine Review* (E. Bayly, 1974) issues 27 and 29 with subsequent additions.

#### 1904

By the spring of 1904 Edison-Bell were producing their first-ever black hard-wax moulded cylinders styled 'The New Gold Moulded Record'. They continued with production of the soft brown wax 'Concert-Grand' and standard size 'Popular' range of cylinders and were to do so for the next couple of years. The new black wax moulded cylinders quickly became a fast selling item. The Edison-Bell manufacturing department must have breathed a sigh of relief. The troublesome indestructible celluloid cylinders were discontinued almost immediately. Edison-Bell never again used

celluloid as a material for cylinder production throughout the following years until they finally abandoned cylinders altogether in 1914.

The Lambert Company London was, according to Frank Andrews, registered on 11th April 1904, Lambert London initially having interests in the production of celluloid cylinders. They were fully aware of the inherent properties of celluloid and the many problems as encountered by their predecessors. Indeed, their early sales literature strongly emphasised the inferior performance of the former unlined and plaster-of-Paris lined celluloid cylinders. Lambert London also stressed the point that their records were not prone to slipping on the phonograph mandrel. No doubt they were hoping to win over an already wary record buying public. Their publicity must have been convincing as surviving cylinders turn up fairly frequently today. In all fairness, Lambert London must have taken a huge gamble in even contemplating celluloid record production, this being in a market where their competitors were losing confidence, if they had not already failed, in supplying the public with indestructible records.

The Lambert London indestructible cylinders are made from black celluloid having a thick cardboard inner lining in the form of a parallel tube. To be more precise, Lambert London sales literature refers to the lining as being made of "hydraulically com-



pressed paper impregnated with an insoluble waterproof material". This lining comes in shades of grey or mauve. Contact with the phonograph mandrel is made by a turned-in celluloid lip at the title end. There is no lip at the lead-on end. Contact here is directly against the cardboard lining. The cylinder design is in fact an open-ended sleeve. This feature proved to be in fact a major weakness in design. On most, if not all, surviving examples the cardboard lining protrudes by anything up to a ¼ inch through the open lead-on end, this being the result of celluloid shrinkage that has in turn forced the lining to slide out of position. The title end then being unsupported has tended to taper inwards. In consequence, surviving cylinders are under considerable stress. They should be handled with the utmost care and respect. Any attempts at forcefully mounting on to the mandrel can result in a sudden fracture. I have had examples split along the whole length without being handled. This is possibly due to a fluctuation in room temperature. So for those collectors who clean and ream, **beware.**

An example of the Lambert London cylinders is illustrated by Ray Phillips in his Lambert account published in *Hillandale News*, Issue 181, page 260. The cylinders have a flat end. The catalogue number, titles and the word "Pat'd" appear in raised lettering within two circles. Often, the catalogue number, take letter and date (in the American fashion) can be seen in the plain area of the surface after the playing grooves. Sometimes the word "Lambert" also appears. This information was incised into the wax during the 'master' stage. The earliest 'master' date that I have examined has been for the 29th May 1904. The actual cylinders were first released for sale by, or around, July. The cost was at 1/6d (7.5 pence) each. By January of 1905 the price had been reduced to 1/- (5 pence) each. The cylinders were at first issued in unlined

boxes having a black and white label that incorporated the Lambert Chicago trademark of an elephant standing on a cylinder! The label soon changed to a red and black colour of similar design. Still quite early on the boxes increased in diameter so that a cotton-backed cardboard lining could be accommodated. Initially the cylinders were styled "Indestructible", then "Permanent" and eventually "Permanent Gold Moulded".

The majority of the the Lambert London recordings made during 1904, and into early 1905, are by Edison-Bell artists. The results of extensive study have revealed the recordings to be of Edison-Bell origin. That is recorded by, or in association with, Edison-Bell. How this system operated I can only speculate. At this point in time Lambert London occupied premises with Edison-Bell at 'Euston Buildings', Euston Road, London. It is possible that Lambert London made use of celluloid record making plant and machinery no longer required by Edison-Bell for production purposes. Whatever the situation, the Lambert London recordings were not manufactured from old and deleted Edison-Bell 'masters'. These were fresh up-to-date recordings. I have been fortunate in being able to make a few comparisons. That is with identical titles and artists on both Lambert London and Edison-Bell issues. One such example is "Down at the Old Bull & Bush" sung by Harry Bluff and another, the descriptive selection "A Hunting Scene" played by the London Regimental Band. Both sets of cylinders show almost identical 'master' dates and both sound to be from a similar, if not the same, recording session. To further substantiate this claim the Lambert London Band and Orchestra selections are by the London Regimental Band and London Concert Orchestra. These recordings are announced by Russell Hunting. It must be pointed out however that during this period a few artists, such as Fred Elton and Edgar Curtis, recorded only for Lambert London and not for Edison-Bell.

## 1905

Lambert London were referring to the celluloid used in the production of their cylinders as "YASCALOID". Early in the year a new 6" long celluloid cylinder was announced to the trade as being in preparation. According to Frank Andrews, the trade announcement stated that the forthcoming 6" cylinders were to be produced in red celluloid. The statement went on to say that a few of the standard size cylinders had been produced already in red celluloid. I know of no surviving examples on Lambert London cylinders in red celluloid. While examples of the standard size may have been produced in red celluloid, by the time the 6" long cylinders were produced several months later I would think these were of the black colour only. The new 6" long black celluloid cylinders were released in August. Apart from the additional length they were identical in appearance to the standard length black celluloid cylinders. These new 6" cylinders were called 'Imperial', and came in an attractive red, white, blue and gold box. They cost 2/- (10 pence) each. Lambert London had high hopes for the new 6" 'Imperial' cylinders. Special phonographs to play then styled 'Lambertphone' were made available in several different models. These machines appear to have been manufactured, either in parts or fully assembled, by the Excelsior Werke, Cologne (EWC), Germany. According to Frank Andrews the Lambert London Company voluntarily wound up shortly afterwards. The initial production run of 100 titles actually fell short of this number. No further titles were made. the 6" 'Imperial' cylinders seldom turn up today.

Although this article has dealt with celluloid indestructible cylinders, it is part of our story and certainly relevant to mention a 2 minute black wax cylinder as produced by Lambert London.

From around the end of January 1905

Lambert London cylinders were no longer of Edison-Bell origin. More artists at this time were of non Edison-Bell talent. Even the band items were now of a different make up and, for recording purposes, known as the Lambert Military Band. certain Lambert London cylinders, of Edison-Bell origin, were released later in the year. However, they were produced from 'masters' recorded several months earlier. Some were almost a year old! From early on in 1905 new 'masters' were being recorded at a much slower rate. In consequence, the progression of new titles to the catalogue was rising only steadily. How did the situation arise? This is difficult to answer but I feel it is one, or a combination, of the following reasons. It is my opinion that Lambert London were experiencing production problems with celluloid cylinders in much the same way as their predecessors. Why did the 'master' recordings produced in association with Edison-Bell suddenly cease? Why was it found necessary to form a new band, the Lambert Military Band? Surely the London Regimental Band and London Concert Orchestra were well established, sold well for Edison-Bell and were to do so for the next few years. Why indeed would Lambert London wish to produce a wax record anyway? Only a matter of months before they were praising the everlasting qualities of permanent records. Why would Edison-Bell allow Lambert London to produce similar, if not identical, recordings? Surely this was competitive. Wasn't competition ruthless amongst these old record makers? It is difficult for us now to piece together events to form a precise outline of the story. Perhaps the Edison-Bell and Lambert association had turned sour. If Lambert London were experiencing production problems with celluloid cylinders then one can understand the planning of a hard wax alternative. However, at the same time the celluloid 6" 'Imperial' cylinders were also in the process of preparation, with phonographs on order from Germany to play them.



By around June no further Lambert London cylinders, of the standard size, were produced in the **British Series**. However, all was not quite over.

A little earlier Lambert London recording engineers had been taking 'masters' in Berlin and Milan. These were eventually processed in London as the black celluloid standard type. A few did find their way on to the later wax series.

The German series ran to some 300 titles and were numbered into a separate block - details to follow. Quite a number, mainly band selections, were sold in Britain. However, the bulk of the order was returned, processed to Germany for distribution through the American Trading Company, Hamburg. Of notable interest was a recording made by the Kaiser. May I again refer the reader to Frank Andrews' 1974 article for an interesting account of this cylinder.

The Italian recordings consist of selections by the Municipal Band of Milan and, most interestingly, by singers of 'La Scala' Milan. Although the band items turn up in Britain from time to time the operatic selections are far more rare. One example I have is sung by Ettore Brancaleoni (bass). He had previously made recordings in Milan for Zonophone, Columbia and A.I.C.C. 'De Luxe' cylinders. The Italian cylinders have a 2 or 3 figure number etched into the plain surface of the cylinder just after the playing grooves. This number bears no relation to the catalogue number. Unlike the German series the Italian Series was not numbered into a separate block. They were numbered into the British series, either being infilled into the consecutive run or, as in the majority of cases being added to the end of the consecutive block, the highest numbers in the British series being Italian recordings. These were, I believe, the last of the Lambert London standard size black celluloid type. They continued to be released at intervals for several months to come.

The black wax moulded cylinders were released in July and called the 'Rex'. They

are well made and have a bevelled title end. Titles, in script at first then in block letters, were of incuse lettering filled with white pigment. Those very few noted of operatic content have the titles filled in with red pigment. The 'Rex' cylinders cost 1/- (5 pence) each and were housed in red/white/blue and gold lettered boxes. Some labels show areas of the blue design replaced by brown. 'Rex' cylinders were in production for a couple of months and ran to some 500 titles.

Interestingly, both the Lambert 'Imperial' and 'Rex' series were numbered **odd** for **vocal** and **even** for **band/instrumental**.

Although the Lambert London company voluntarily wound up in August I have been unable to determine when manufacturing ceased. It was possibly at that time, or fairly shortly afterwards. The liquidators still continued to release batches of both the standard size celluloid and 'Imperial' cylinders until towards the end of the year. The 'Rex' waxes, that were the last of the Lambert London cylinders to be manufactured, continued being released beyond the year end.

## 1906

The final release date for the 'Rex' cylinders was February. Lambert London stock was being disposed of in bulk at various intervals throughout the year.

## Additional Information

I have stated above that 'Rex' cylinders were the last of the range to be manufactured by Lambert London, that is, to the best of my knowledge through record research. I have no written evidence to substantiate this.

A series of 24 French Language Instruction cylinders by Monsieur de Werro were released in December 1905 on 'Rex' records. I have never seen any to pass comment.

Lambert London manufactured black celluloid standard size cylinders for the Salvation Army. I have seen examples, but have not

had the opportunity to take detailed notes.

I have in my possession a Lambert London black celluloid cylinder that has no identification whatever. That is no embossed titles, no catalogue number, no spoken announcement and no markings. It is a band piece and continues playing until the stylus drops off at the end. It could be a factory test piece: can someone advise otherwise?

## Numbering System

(Highest numbers shown are approximate)

### Standard Size Black Celluloid

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| British | Band/Instrumental 1 to 300<br>Vocal 5001 to 5400   |
| Italian | Infilled into the above series.<br>Highest numbers are Italian.<br>Approximately 300 titles. |

German All selections 8001 to 8400

### 6" Long Black Celluloid "Imperial"

- All selections 1 to 85  
Odd numbers vocal - even  
numbers band/instrumental

### Standard Size Black Wax "Rex"

- All selections (incl. Italian &  
German) 1 to 500

## Typical Spoken Announcements

### Standard Size Black Celluloid

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| British | "Down at the Old Bull & Bush,<br>sung by Harry Bluff, Lambert<br>Record".<br><br>"Marche Comique, played by the<br>Lambert Military Band".  |
| Italian | "Lucrezia Borgia, Qualunque sia<br>l'evento, cantate Brancaleoni,<br>Compagnia Lambert".<br><br>"Inno di Garibaldi, Professori di<br>Banda Municipale di Milano,<br>Compagnia Lambert". |

German "Donau Wellen, Lambert Record"

6" Imperial "The Diver, sung by W. G.  
Webber, Imperial Record"

S/size Black Wax Rex

"The Cowslip and the Boy sung  
by Alf Gordon Rex Record"

## Corrections and additions to Part 1

*Page 42, paragraph 3.* Should read: Corruganza

*Page 46, Question 1.* Should read: Did the Lambert Chicago Company purchase the bulk, if not all of their 'master' cylinders from outside sources?

*Page 46, Question 2.* Where I asked if the Lambert Chicago Company were still manufacturing indestructibles and adding fresh titles until late 1905, U.S.A. collector, Allen Koenigsberg has produced a most extensive listing of those cylinders. However, there are gaps, in particular at the lower end of the range. Allen lists 1050 as the lowest number. I possess a copy of number 1030 and this is pink. Therefore it is possible that the entire number range were produced in the pink colour. According to Allen, black cylinders, of the Lambert Chicago Company were first produced in October 1903. Certainly many lower numbered selections were re-made in black celluloid. I ask the question that if the Lambert Chicago Company were in operation for a further year or two, were they adding further titles to the catalogue?

With regard to the Lambert Chicago 5" 'Grand' cylinders: although these were produced as dyed pink celluloid I failed to add that they also appeared later in black celluloid. Some years ago a collector from Manchester, no longer with us, showed me a 5" Grand celluloid cylinder that was coloured brown. This was during a C.L.P.G.S. Midlands Group Phonofair. We did not have a machine at our disposal that



could play Grand cylinders so we never heard this cylinder. It was housed in a Lambert Chicago box. Although Standard Size celluloids were produced in this colour may I ask our U.S.A. readers if the 'Grand' cylinders were also produced in brown?

## CYLINDER COMPARISON CHART

(All Standard Size Celluloid unless noted otherwise)

Year	Lambert Chicago	Edison-Bell	Lambert London
1900/01	White (orange?) and pink cylinders available in Britain		
1902	Dyed Pink cylinders available in Britain	Master cylinders prepared (circa July) for shipment to Chicago for processing. Returned to Britain for eventual sale November. Supplied Lambert Chicago with 'masters' to augment their catalogue.	
1903	Dyed pink, brown & black (including 5" Concert-Grand size) now only available in Britain in very limited quantities. Supplies eventually ceased although manufacture continued in U.S.A. until 1905.	'Masters' supplied to Lambert Chicago for their & Edison-Bell use. E.Bell commence manufacturing their own cylinders in brown celluloid - April. By July, cylinders now black celluloid 'Ebony'. Cylinders, of all colours, plaster core lined from stock towards year end.	
1904		Manufacture of celluloid cylinders ceased - circa April 'Master' cylinders for Lambert Chicago use no longer supplied.	'Master' cylinders prepared in association with E.Bell, (circa May). Black celluloid cylinders on sale (circa July). A few artists not of E.Bell origin.
1905		Special catalogues issued to sell off vast quantities of celluloid cylinders in all colours, at reduced prices.	'Master' cylinders prepared in association with E.Bell phased out (circa January). Same cylinders announced as being in red celluloid? Manufacture of British issues ceased (circa June). 'Masters' taken at Berlin & Milan (circa June). 'Rex' black wax moulded cyls. released July. 'Imperial' 6" long black celluloid cyls. released August.
1906			Final releases being 'Rex' black wax, February. All stock disposed off in bulk throughout year.

## FROM THE ROSTRUM

### Christie's South Kensington, April 2nd 1992

This sale had a large and varied gramophone section, the most remarkable part of which (if not the most desirable) was a collection of spare parts for horn gramophones. This was the result of a dealer's cannibalisations and putting by of 'bits that might come in useful one day' of many years. When again will we see 96 motors and 58 horns in one sale? Prices were modest for most of these, for such parts are not as scarce as they once were, what with reproductions and Indian imports. I recall a single, anonymous back-bracket raising £40 about six years ago, but now 40 brackets reached a hammer price of £130.

To more serious matters: there were plenty of complete gramophones in the sale, and, as ever the good ones did well. A very clean and original trade-mark model, with a canvas carrying case, topped the last two examples by realising £2,800. This was all the more noteworthy as it had a black horn (repainted, the only restoration on the machine) rather than a brass one. Then there was a De Luxe Gramophone of circa 1912 with mahogany horn, gilt-metal mounts and a stand in similar style. The machine itself is not known ever to have appeared in the Gramophone Company's U.K. catalogues, but in Germany it was known as 'De Luxe III'. The stand is known from no catalogue, but an identical one is still at EMI, with a similar (but not identical) gramophone.

The machine and stand on offer had apparently been on display itself at EMI in the 1930s, and was acquired by an employee when deemed surplus to requirements. This explains the chromium plating on most of the bright parts where nickel

should be; the Hayes factory in the 1930s would simply have replated in the then-current material, historical accuracy not being important for an object only 25 years old. With some of the gilt-metal mounts missing, the outfit sold at a well-deserved £3,500.

Other Gramophone Company products included a Pigmy Grand at £380; a 510 (Lumière) at £1,300; a mahogany record cabinet at £550 (record price for a record cabinet?); an oak ditto at £220; a 163 at £320; a red 101 at £160 and a 100 at £200. A very derelict New Style No.3 (the one that looks like a Dog Model but isn't) brought £700; a Model II with mahogany horn £1,000 and a 194 £3,000.

As for other makes: an EMG Mark Xb Tropical (i.e. with two-piece horn) reached £2,400; but a Mark X/IX with 22-inch horn and interesting provenance (it had once belonged to Augustus John) could only manage £1,200. It is amazing what gets done to gramophones; in the last sale, we had a 202 from which the re-entrant horn had been removed, while this EMG turned out to have had its double-spring motor converted to single-spring. Presumably it had been repaired by a mechanic, who hadn't heard of EMO.

A fairly basic Klingsor made £700 and a pretty bijou grand Clifftophone was £400. Not only was it small, it was beautifully original; the classic formula for a successful sale.

Christopher Proudfoot





## REVIEWS

### NIPPER BITES BACK

After all these years!!! The HMV Nipper is being restored ~ to a limited series of CD reissues from 78 material. There are already four excellent releases, superbly transferred: CDH MV1 Eric Coates conducting his own works; CDH MV2 Sidney Torch conducting light music; CDH MV3 Drawing Room Ballads (by Dawson, Booth, Nash, Oldham, Robeson; Glynne etc.); CDH MV4 Bernard Miles with rural characters and stories and Kipling poetry. Each is a must for a 'mature' collection. All have 72 minutes playing time.

Ernie Bayly

### BILLY WILLIAMS (1878-1915) and FRED GODFREY (1880-1953) "THE REGAL YEARS"

The team of "Williams and Godfrey" produced some fine songs for the music hall which Billy Williams sang with gusto on stage. They also wrote songs for other artists of the music hall or pantomime.

Kingfisher Cassettes have issued a two-cassette set of Billy Williams singing thirty-seven songs that appeared under the Williams and Godfrey publication on Regal records, where possible using later Australian pressings with superior laminated surfaces. Before going further it must be stressed that some Regals began their lives as Columbias (or Columbia-Renas), Jumbos and Scalas. The dates of the original issues range from 1911 to 1914.

The early death of Billy Williams robbed the music hall of a fine presenter of songs who had a wonderfully clear enunciation; for although all of his recordings were acoustic it is easy to understand every word he sings or 'patters'. The excellent transfers from the original 78s engineered by Rex McClean of Launceston, Tasmania, enable us to realise how relaxed Billy was even when recording. At the end of various songs he indulges in patter. After "Take me back to USA" he chats and suddenly says, "What's that? Alright, I'm going home". Presumably the recording engineer signalled that the space on the wax running out. I often find that many artists are far better "live" on stage than when performing for radio or television. These little spots of relaxed patter give us a tiny glimpse of him on stage.

The 'popular' songs of any era provide us with an insight into the life or thoughts of the times. This is certainly true with Williams and Godfrey ~ even in the nonsense song "Why can't we have the sea in London?" we hear attitudes to sea-bathing and suitable dress. "My lass frae Glasgae toon" is a strong nod in the direction of Harry Lauder with its accent and lilt. "The Kangaroo Hop" makes fun of the novelty dances which were coming in as dance fashions were beginning to vere towards foxtrots, etc. While comparing the compilation under review with the CD produced by the Australian National Film and Sound Archive, although both claim to have used a Regal record as source, each has different patter. So did Regal use two sources, or, has one engineer forgotten which record he/she used? I do not have the Columbia 78, but found that the Jumbo version is the same as used by Kingfisher, which is listed in the Billy Williams discography by Andrews and Bayly.

"Oh! For another day at Margate" reminds us that many living in south-east London used to have seaside holidays at Margate, travelling by paddle steamer down the Thames, or by train. The journey was relatively short and cheap. Billy's subjects

went by train (but other singers had songs like the "The Margate Boat", etc.). It was a well-known topic for music hall artists even up to the days of such as Ronald Frankau. "The Ragtime Wedding" makes fun of the ragtime craze which began in Britain around the end of King Edward's reign. "There must be something nice about the Isle of Man" praises a favourite holiday resort for those in northern England. A little piece of social history creeps into "The worst of it is, I like it" when he refers to "Lloyd George's 30 Bob" - being 'dole' for the unemployed which had just been introduced along with the "Old Age Pension" for which he and the Liberals had to fight hard in Parliament. "Jean loves all the jockeys" is based upon a list of horse racing jockeys of that time (I can visualise Billy and friends riding up that steep hill to Brighton race course) while "When Mother backed the winner of the Derby" tells of the unusual events arising from her fortune!!

If you, like me, are a Music Hall or Billy Williams fan you will need this excellent compilation that gives a generous slice of Billy Williams' songs which have been so well transferred from fine originals. I have received no notice of the price, so suggest that enthusiasts write to the publishers: Cyball Pty Ltd., P.O. Box 1660, Port Macquarie, NSW 2444, Australia. Tel: 065-81-0576.

Ernie Bayly

## **ODEON Part 1 1926-1934, by Björn Englund**

Arkivet för Ljud och Bild, Box 7371, 103 91-Stockholm, Sweden. Price: SEK 200

This discography is the first in a series of volumes which will list all Swedish recordings made by Odeon for this country. Included will also be found material made for other labels such as 'Dixi', 'Silverton', 'Grand', 'Hemmata Herold' and 'Kristall'.

The Swedish Odeon recordings have an Sto matrix series; also included are recordings in the Norwegian Nw matrix series, where sung in Swedish. The sources for the book are the matrix lists and recording ledgers from 1926 and onwards, which are now in the Lindström Archive in Cologne. Also are included Swedish titles in the Be matrix series.

The catalogue contains around 4000 titles, with recording dates. There are several indexes, an artist register, catalogue and matrix number register and a listing of recording engineers, making the book easy to use as a reference. The catalogue index contains all known issues in both the domestic and foreign market.

A cassette tape can also be obtained, at a price of SEK 50, containing a wide selection of 24 of the Odeon record sides.

Most of the records listed are of a popular kind, dance music, artists like Zarah Leander, Ernst Rolf, Sven-Olof Sandberg, but there are also listings of titles by Swedish opera singers such as Kerstin Thorberg, Brita Herzberg and Einar Larson.

The preface is in Swedish, with a shorter introduction in English. The discography is as complete as one can possibly want, and ought to be of interest to collectors outside Scandinavia, as much was also issued on foreign markets.

Succeeding parts of this work are awaited, which, when completed will give an excellent view of the output of one of Europe's largest record companies.

Holders of sterling and U.S. dollars are advised to contact the above address for equivalent prices.

Tom Valle





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